



# Office of the City Clerk

City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle St.  
Room 107  
Chicago, IL 60602  
www.chicityclerk.com

## Legislation Text

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File #: O2014-4162, Version: 1

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### ORDINANCE

#### **(Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building 754 South Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-630 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building, located at 754 South Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street, Chicago, Illinois (the "Building"), on the property legally described in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein, satisfies three (3) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the significance of synagogue buildings as important religious, community and social buildings in the history of Chicago's Jewish communities; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the important and significant history of the North Lawndale neighborhood in the early 20th century when it was Chicago's most prominent Jewish neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, through its location on Independence Boulevard, the Building reflects the importance of Douglas and Independence boulevards as important locations for the Lawndale community's significant institutions and synagogues; and

WHEREAS, the Building is a handsome and well-built synagogue building, and it exemplifies this property type of significance to Chicago neighborhood history; and

WHEREAS, the Building was designed in the Classical Revival architectural style, a historically important style in the history of Chicago and significant in the design of Chicago synagogues in the early 20th century; and

WHEREAS, the Building is finely crafted with traditional building materials, including yellow face brick and gray limestone; and

WHEREAS, the Building is detailed with Classical-style details, such as its front pedimented entrance with attached Ionic columns; and

WHEREAS, the Building's sanctuary and associated vestibule are finely crafted and detailed with Classical-style ornament, including large-scale Corinthian pilasters and brilliantly-colored stained-glass windows; and

WHEREAS, the Building's sanctuary is also ornamented with a finely-crafted, decorative-metal chandelier, hung from a recessed "lantern" at the center of the ceiling that is decorated with stained-glass panels and ornamental moldings; and

WHEREAS, the Building is the work of the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham, with the firm's senior partner, Henry L. Newhouse being a significant architect working in Chicago's neighborhoods

in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; and

WHEREAS, working either solo or in partnership with Felix M. Bernham, Newhouse

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designed many buildings of note, including the Melissia Ann Elam House (a designated Chicago Landmark), the former KAM Synagogue (now Operation PUSH) and several houses and small flat buildings in the Washington Park Court Chicago Landmark District, located east of S. King Dr. and north of Washington Park; and

WHEREAS, Newhouse is also significant for his commercial designs, including the Sutherland Hotel at S. Drexel Blvd. and E. 47th St., built in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and several movie theaters, including the Howard, Metropolitan and Roseland theaters (either demolished or converted to non-theater use); and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; and

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2014, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago (the "City Council") that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

SECTION 1. The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building; and
- The sanctuary with its balcony; and
- The entrance vestibule to the sanctuary, with its staircases to the sanctuary balcony.

SECTION 4. For the purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code, the following "Additional Guidelines - Interior" shall apply:

The significant features of the Building's interior spaces include their overall historic spatial volumes, historic decorative wall and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, historic decorative-metal chandelier and associated decorative recessed "lantern" with stained-glass panels, and historic large-scale stained-glass windows lighting the sanctuary balcony. The following elements are specifically excluded as significant features: small-scale stained-glass windows under the sanctuary balcony, sanctuary wall sconces, and vestibule staircase light fixtures. Non-historic elements of the sanctuary and vestibule, including vestibule lighting, sanctuary pews, sanctuary balcony railings and balcony projection booth, are not considered significant features for the purpose of this designation.

SECTION 5. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately

identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

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SECTION 6. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 7. All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 8. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

### **EXHIBIT A**

#### **(Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building 754 South Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street Property Description**

#### **Legal Description:**

The South 12 feet of Lot 49 and Lots 50 and 51 in Garfield Boulevard Addition to Chicago, being a Subdivision of Lot 1 in Block 3 and Lot 1 in Block 4 in the Circuit Court Partition of the West half of the South West quarter of Section 14, Township 39 North, Range 13, East of the Third Principal Meridian, in Cook County, Illinois.

#### **PIN:**

**16-14-310-041-0000 Commonly known**

#### **as:**

754 South Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street Chicago, Illinois

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Department of Planning and Development city of chicago

May 22, 2014

The Honorable Susana Mendoza City Clerk City  
of Chicago Room 107, City Hall 121 North  
LaSalle Street Chicago, Illinois 60602

**RE: Recommendation for the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building, 754 S. Independence Blvd. / 3808 W. Polk St.**

Dear Clerk Mendoza:

We are filing with your office for introduction at the May 28, 2014, City Council meeting as a transmittal to the Mayor and City Council of Chicago the recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The material being submitted to you for this proposal includes the:

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1. Recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks; and
2. Proposed Ordinance. Thank you for your

cooperation in this matter. Sincerely,

Eleanor Esser Gorski, AIA Director of Historic

Preservation Historic Preservation Division  
Bureau of Zoning and Land Use

ends.

cc: *Alderman Michael Chandler, 24<sup>th</sup> Ward (without enclosure)*

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 1000. CHICAGO. ILLINOIS 60602

**CITY OF CHICAGO COMMISSION ON CHICAGO  
LANDMARKS**

**May 1, 2014**

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT CHICAGO  
LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR THE**

**(FORMER) ANSHE SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE BUILDING 754 South  
Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street**

**Docket No. 2014-02**

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:**

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building (the "Building"), located at 754 South Independence Boulevard / 3808 West Polk Street, is worthy of Chicago Landmark designation. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three (3) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

- 1. Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
- 4. Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

5. *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

## **I. BACKGROUND**

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on March 6, 2014, when the Commission received a "preliminary summary of information" at the Commission's regular meeting of March 6th from the Department of Planning and Development ("DPD"), summarizing the historical and architectural background of the Building. At said meeting, the Commission voted to approve a "preliminary landmark recommendation" for the Building, based on its finding that it appeared to meet three of the seven criteria for designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code, as well as the integrity criterion set forth in Section 2-120-630(ii) of the Municipal Code.

The Commission's Landmark Designation Report for the Building, initially adopted by the Commission on March 6, 2014, and revised as of this date, which contains specific information

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about the Building's architectural and historical significance, is incorporated herein and attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Designation Report").

At its regular meeting of April 3, 2014, the Commission received a report from Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner of DPD, stating that the proposed landmark designation of the Building supports the City's overall planning goals and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans. This report is incorporated herein and attached hereto as Exhibit B (the "DPD Report").

On April 8, 2014, the Commission officially requested consent to the proposed landmark designation from the owner of the Building. On April 24, 2014, the Commission received a consent form, dated April 24, 2014, and signed by Jerome L. Davis and Donald L. Bedney, representatives of the owner of the Building, consenting to the proposed landmark designation of the Building.

## **II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-650 of the Municipal Code, the Commission shall notify the owner of its determination with respect to the proposed Chicago Landmark designation within 45 days after receipt of the owner's consent; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report, the DPD Report, and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Building; and

WHEREAS, the Building meets three criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the significance of synagogue buildings as important religious, community and social buildings in the history of Chicago's Jewish communities; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the important and significant history of the North Lawndale neighborhood in the early 20th century when it was Chicago's most prominent Jewish neighborhood. Through its location on Independence Boulevard, the Building reflects the importance of Douglas and Independence boulevards as important locations for the Lawndale community's significant institutions and synagogues; and

WHEREAS, the Building is a handsome and well-built synagogue building, and it exemplifies this property

type of significance to Chicago neighborhood history; and

WHEREAS, the Building was designed in the Classical Revival architectural style, a historically important style in the history of Chicago and significant in the design of Chicago synagogues in the early 20th century; and

WHEREAS, the Building is finely crafted with traditional building materials, including yellow face brick and gray limestone. It is detailed with Classical-style details such as its front pedimented entrance with attached Ionic columns; and

WHEREAS, the Building's sanctuary and associated vestibule are finely crafted and detailed with Classical-style ornament. The sanctuary has large-scale Corinthian pilasters and brilliantly-colored stained-glass windows. The sanctuary is also ornamented with a finely-crafted, decorative-metal chandelier, hung from a recessed "lantern" at the center of the ceiling that is decorated with stained-glass panels and ornamental moldings; and

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WHEREAS, the Building is the work of the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham, with the firm's senior partner, Henry L. Newhouse being a significant architect working in Chicago's neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; and

WHEREAS, working either solo or in partnership with Felix M. Bernham, Newhouse designed many buildings of note, including the Melissia Ann Elam House (a designated Chicago Landmark), the former KAM Synagogue (now Operation PUSH) and several houses and small flat buildings in the Washington Park Court Chicago Landmark District, located east of S. King Dr. and north of Washington Park; and

WHEREAS, Newhouse is also significant for his commercial designs, including the Sutherland Hotel at S. Drexel Blvd. and E. 47th St., built in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and several movie theaters, including the Howard, Metropolitan and Roseland theaters (either demolished or converted to non-theater use); and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

**THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:**

1. Adopts the recitals, findings and statements of fact set forth in the preamble and Sections 1 and [I hereof as the findings of the Commission; and
2. Adopts the Designation Report, as revised, and dated as of this 1st day of May 2014; and
3. Finds, based on the Designation Report, DPD Report and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and
4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as
  - All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building; and
  - The sanctuary with its balcony; and
  - The entrance vestibule to the sanctuary, with its staircases to the sanctuary balcony.

The significant features of these interior spaces include their overall historic spatial volumes, historic decorative wall

and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, historic decorative-metal chandelier and associated decorative recessed "lantern" with stained-glass panels, and historic large-scale stained-glass windows lighting the sanctuary balcony. Specifically excluded as significant features are small-scale stained-glass windows under the sanctuary balcony, sanctuary wall sconces, and vestibule staircase light fixtures. Non-historic elements of the sanctuary and vestibule, including vestibule lighting, sanctuary pews, sanctuary balcony railings and balcony projection booth, are not considered significant features for the purpose of this proposed designation; and

6. Recommends the designation of the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

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*This recommendation was adopted* *unw.rv^ruyU^ /7"Q )*

Rafael M. Leon, Chairman Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated:

## Exhibit A

# LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

## **(Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building** (now Independence Boulevard Seventh-Day Adventist Church) 754 S. Independence Blvd. / 3808 W. Polk St.

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,  
May 1, 2014

CITY OF CHICAGO Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner

*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.*

*The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.*

*This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the*

*designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

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# **(Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building**

**(now Independence Boulevard  
Seventh-Day Adventist Church)  
754 S. Independence Blvd. / 3808 W. Polk St.**

**Built: 1924-1926**

**Architect: Newhouse and Bernham**

Located in the North Lawndale community area on Chicago's far West Side, the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building exemplifies the significant history of Jews in Chicago. With roots dating back to 1870, Anshe Sholom was one of the earliest Orthodox synagogues founded in Chicago by Eastern-European Jewish immigrants.

Anshe Sholom began its existence in the Maxwell Street neighborhood at the corner of Canal and Liberty. In 1910, it followed its congregation westward to a new Classical Revival-style building at Ashland and Polk. Then, in 1926, it moved yet again to North Lawndale, as the community was rapidly becoming the most important Jewish neighborhood in Chicago. The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building exemplifies this important cultural history that North Lawndale represents.

The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building, with its Classical Revival-style exterior of yellow brick and gray limestone, is a handsome example of synagogue architecture. It possesses a finely-detailed sanctuary with brilliantly-colored stained-glass windows. The building was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham. Senior partner Henry L. Newhouse was a prominent and prolific architect working in Chicago neighborhoods.

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In the mid-1950s, Anshe Sholom Synagogue relocated to the Lake View neighborhood as part of the larger transition of North Lawndale from Jewish to African American in the post-World War II era. Its former Independence Boulevard building is now the Independence Boulevard Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which has been a prominent presence in the Lawndale community for decades.

## **The Early History of Jews in Chicago and** the founding of the anshe sholom synagogue

Chicago was incorporated as a village in 1833. By 1841, its first Jewish settlers had arrived in the frontier settlement. Soon after, the increase in Jewish residents brought about the founding of Chicago's first synagogue, Kehilath Anshe Mayriv (KAM) Synagogue in 1847.

These earliest Jewish Chicagoans were immigrants from Germany and Central Europe, and they settled primarily on the South Side. Although early Jewish Chicagoans practiced traditional Orthodox Judaism, the new Reform Judaism, which advocated a modernized approach to the faith, was making inroads among the City's German Jews in the late 19th century.

In the years immediately after the Civil War, a second wave of Jewish immigration began to come to Chicago, this time from Eastern Europe. Jews from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, and other areas historically associated with Russia made up this population. Unlike the first German Jews, who had largely been city dwellers in Europe, these Eastern European Jews were mainly rural and village dwellers and strongly Orthodox in their faith and traditional in their lifestyles. They largely settled in Chicago on the Near West Side in the Maxwell Street neighborhood.

The Maxwell Street neighborhood, centered on Maxwell and Halsted streets, grew through the remainder of the 19th century into an important Jewish community and the center of life for these Jews from Eastern Europe. The neighborhood at its peak housed thousands of Jewish residents along with shops, schools, about 40 synagogues and various other institutions.

It was in the Maxwell Street neighborhood that Anshe Sholom Synagogue as a religious institution can trace its roots. A pioneering Orthodox synagogue with roots in Eastern Europe, Ohave Sholom Mariampol, one of two predecessor synagogues to Anshe Sholom, was established in 1870 by immigrants from Mariampol, a village in Lithuania. It was housed for many years in a synagogue at the intersection of Canal and Liberty streets, on the eastern edge of the Maxwell Street neighborhood near the south branch of the Chicago River.

Over the decades, as the Eastern European Jewish community grew and prospered, it spread away from its Maxwell Street roots and into neighborhoods to the west. Institutions, including synagogues, followed. Ohave Sholom Mariampol followed its members west when it built a new Classical Revival-style building at Ashland Avenue and Polk Street in 1910. This handsome building, complete with colonnaded pediment and dome, was designed by

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LEXINGTON ST.

**The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building (now the Independence Boulevard Seventh-Day Adventist Church) is a brick-and-limestone building built from 1924 to 1926. It is located on the northwest corner of S. Independence Blvd. and W. Polk St. in the North Lawndale community area on Chicago's far West Side.**

POLK ST.

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**Right: Anshe Sholom Synagogue was founded by Eastern-European Jews who had immigrated to Chicago and settled in the Maxwell Street area on Chicago's Near West Side. During its heyday in the late 19th century, the Maxwell Street neighborhood was the center of life, commerce and culture for thousands of Jews from Russia, the Baltic states, Poland and other Eastern European countries.**

**Bottom: Its open-air market was a distinctive part of the neighborhood.**

**The Anshe Sholom congregation was a merger of two early Orthodox Jewish congregations, Ohave Sholom Mariampol and Anshe Kalvaria.**

**Left: An early Ohave Sholom Mariampol synagogue building at Canal and Liberty in the Maxwell Street neighborhood; it has been demolished.**

**Bottom: In 1910, Ohave Sholom Mariampol moved to a new building on S. Ashland Ave. at W. Polk St. There, in 1915, the congregation merged with Anshe Kalvaria to form Anshe Sholom. The building is now St. Basil Greek Orthodox Church.**

Alexander L. Levy. (The building is now St. Basil Greek Orthodox Church). In 1916, Ohave Sholom Mariampol merged with another congregation, Anshe Kalvaria, and was renamed Anshe Sholom.

Within 15 years of moving to Ashland, the continued westward migration of the congregation caused Anshe Sholom to plan a move to the North Lawndale community area on Chicago's far West Side, which by the 1920s was becoming the new center of life for Orthodox Jews migrating from Maxwell Street.

## **Building Construction and Description**

A building permit for the new Anshe Sholom Synagogue building in North Lawndale was issued by the City of Chicago on December 27, 1924. The architect listed on the permit was H.L. Newhouse, although most newspaper and other sources at the time credited the building to the partnership of Newhouse and Bernham. The contractor was the N.S. Construction Co. The estimated building cost listed on the permit was \$150,000, although contemporary newspaper reports indicated a \$300,000 budget. Construction was completed by early 1926.

The resulting building occupies the northwest corner of South Independence Boulevard and West Polk Street, several miles directly west of the synagogue's former building at Ashland and Polk. It faces Independence Boulevard itself, which is one of Chicago's park boulevards that form a landscaped "necklace" that connects the large West Side parks- Humboldt, Garfield, and Douglas-with the lakefront parks of Washington and Jackson.

The overall appearance of the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is one of visual dignity, with its Classical-style exterior meant to fit into, yet remain visually distinct, within the North Lawndale community. The building historically was one of several large-scale buildings built for Jewish institutions and synagogues that were built along Independence and Douglas boulevards during the 1910s and 1920s. The building has a rectangular floor plan, with a large synagogue sanctuary and circulation spaces occupying the front two-thirds of the building and a community center with meeting halls, classrooms and auxiliary spaces located at the rear of the building.

The building's street elevations, facing Independence and Polk, are built of yellow face brick, while common brick clads the north and west (alley) elevations. Gray limestone is used for detailing and trim, most dramatically for a large Classical-style surround on the Independence facade that "frames" a multi-door entrance and windows above. This surround is handsomely-detailed with engaged Ionic columns supporting a triangular rooftop pediment. Carved stone tablets with Hebrew script ornament the pediment. The south (Polk) facade is more simply ornamented than the Independence Boulevard facade, with a second-floor gray limestone window surround ornamented with Ionic pilasters and a shallow pediment. The building's exterior has excellent historic integrity.

Inside, the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building has an entrance vestibule that opens directly into a large, roughly square, high-ceilinged sanctuary. Staircases at either

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**The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is built of yellow brick and gray limestone and designed in the Classical Revival architectural style. The main (Independence Blvd.) elevation has a large Classical-style "frontispiece" with gray limestone Ionic columns supporting a triangular pediment ornamented with tablets with Hebrew script.**

**A small entrance vestibule (bottom left) leads into a large sanctuary (top & bottom right) with a large U-shaped balcony. Classical-style moldings and Corinthian pilasters detail the sanctuary.**

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**Top left and right: Details of the sanctuary's Classical-style details.**

**Left: The sanctuary has a large decorative-metal chandelier hung from a recessed "lantern" ringed by stained-glass panels and edged with decorative moldings.**

The sanctuary's balcony is lighted by large windows filled with brilliantly-colored stained glass ornamented with a variety of biblical motives.

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end of the vestibule provide access to a U-shaped balcony that overlooks the sanctuary. Classical-style pilasters with Corinthian columns ornament sanctuary walls, and the ceiling is edged with Classical-style moldings. Finely-detailed and brilliantly-colored stained glass fills tall windows that light the balcony area, while simpler stained glass (much of it non-historic) fills smaller, rectangular windows under the balcony at ground-floor level. A historic, intricately-detailed, decorative-metal chandelier hangs from the middle of the ceiling under a round light well, or "lantern." This lantern extends up into the ceiling in the middle of the space and is ornamented with stained-glass windows and edged with decorative moldings.

## The North Lawndale Community Area in the Early 20th Century

The North Lawndale community area, where the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is located, was renowned during the early 20th century as the center of Orthodox Jewish life and culture in Chicago. While the German Jewish families that had arrived in the city earlier in the 19th century largely lived on Chicago's South Side in the early 20th century, Orthodox Jews with Eastern European roots were migrating west from Maxwell Street and had settled on North Lawndale as the community's "second-generation" neighborhood. Started in the 19th century, but largely developed in the early 20th century, North Lawndale had newer houses and small flat buildings than did the Maxwell Street neighborhood, and its buildings typically had larger, more modern interiors that allowed for more gracious living. Anchored by the broad Douglas and Independence Boulevards with their park-like medians, and with Douglas Park on its eastern border and Garfield Park to the north, North Lawndale had much more expansive green space than the older Maxwell Street neighborhood and was more upscale in feel.

By 1930, North Lawndale was largely built up. Its main commercial street, Roosevelt Road, was lined with stores, offices, and theaters. To the north, Sears, Roebuck & Co., the giant mail-order retailer, had its headquarters campus which provided thousands of jobs, many for North Lawndale residents. To the west stood the Western Electric complex, another large employer, across the city border in Cicero. Graceful graystones and handsome apartment buildings lined Douglas and Independence, while typically smaller, but still gracious, houses and two- and three-flats could be found on side streets. Transportation to downtown was convenient



agogue (demolished), Congregation Anshe Roumanian (now Stone Temple Baptist Church), and Anshe Sholom.

By 1946, North Lawndale housed roughly 65,000 Jews, approximately one quarter of the city's Jewish population. By 1960, less than two decades later, more than 90% of the community area's population was African American as Jewish residents and institutions moved to other city neighborhoods, including West Rogers Park, and suburbs such as Skokie.

## **The Classical Revival Architectural Style and Chicago Synagogue Architecture**

Historically, Jewish synagogues were built in styles common to and popular in the communities where they were built. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States, this meant that synagogues were built in a plethora of styles, including common ones such as Classical Revival and more exotic styles such as Moorish and Egyptian Revival, both of which were rooted in the Middle East and considered to have at least some connection to the historic roots of Judaism.

In Chicago, historic architectural styles used for synagogues range from the Classical Revival architectural style, which was used for the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building, to eclectic buildings based on visual elements of exotic styles such as Byzantine and Islamic architecture. Innovative architects such as Louis Sullivan brought their own personal styles to synagogue architecture, as seen in Sullivan's Sinai Temple (demolished) and KAM Synagogue (severely damaged by fire).

The Classical Revival style was especially popular. Originally based on the ancient architecture of Greece and Rome, Classicism had become a stylistic staple of Western architecture over centuries of use. For Jews, it was an accepted style that importantly did not have the strong historic ties to Christianity that the Gothic Revival did. As early as 1759, Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, considered the oldest synagogue building in America, was built in an 18th-century version of the Classical Revival style.

In Chicago, the Classical Revival was a style popularly used for synagogues, especially in the early 20th century. The style was used for both Orthodox and Reform synagogues. Noteworthy examples including Temple Isaiah (now Ebenezer Baptist Church) at 4501 S. Vincennes, built in 1898-99 to a design by Dankmar Adler; Sinai Temple (now Mt. Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church), located at 4600 S. King Dr. and designed in 1910 by Alfred Alschuler; Anshe Emet Synagogue at 3760 N. Pine Grove Ave., designed also by Alschuler and built in 1910-11; and KAM Synagogue (now Operation PUSH) at 4945 S. Drexel Blvd., designed in 1923-24 by Newhouse and Bernham (the designers of Anshe Sholom). The Anshe Sholom congregation used Classical Revival both for their 1910 building on S. Ashland Ave., designed by Alexander Levy, and their later Independence Blvd. structure by Newhouse and Bernham.

The Classical Revival architectural style was a popular style for many Chicago synagogues and temples, including Anshe Sholom. Examples include (top) Temple Isaiah (now Ebenezer Baptist Church) at 4501 S. Vincennes Ave. (built 1898-91; a designated Chicago Landmark); (middle) Sinai Temple (now Mt. Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church), 4600 S. King Dr. (1910), and (bottom) Anshe Emet Synagogue, 3760 N. Pine Grove Ave. (1910-11).

## Architects Newhouse and Bernham

The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is the design of the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham. Henry Leopold Newhouse (1874-1929), the firm's senior partner, was born in Chicago. He began his education in the city's public school system, then studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he graduated in 1894. He was a prolific architect, designing many types of buildings, including houses and apartment buildings, hotels, commercial buildings and movie theaters, and synagogues. In History of the Jews in Chicago, published in 1924, Newhouse is credited with the design of over 4000 structures during his long career.

Felix M. Bernham (1885-1970), the firm's junior partner, was also born in Chicago. He trained in architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago and at Armour Institute (a predecessor school to today's Illinois Institute of Technology). Soon after graduation, he joined Newhouse in practice. After Newhouse's death in 1929, Bernham continued in practice with Newhouse's two sons (Henry Jr. and Karl) for a number of years.

Buildings designed by Newhouse, either working solo or in partnership with Bernham, include houses and small flat buildings that form a significant part of the Washington Park Court Chicago Landmark District on Chicago's South Side. He also designed the Melissia Ann Elam house (a designated Chicago Landmark) at 4726 S. King Dr. in 1903. With Newhouse as a member of KAM Synagogue, Newhouse and Bernham designed the congregation's building at 4945 S. Drexel Blvd. (built 1923-24), which is now the Operation PUSH headquarters. Newhouse also designed the Sutherland Hotel at 47th St. and S. Drexel Blvd., built in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Newhouse also designed a number of movie theaters in the Chicago area, including the Howard, Roseland and Metropolitan theaters (either demolished or converted to non-theater use).

## Later Years

The North Lawndale community area transitioned from largely Jewish to African American in the years following World War II. As Anshe Sholom's congregation moved out of the neighborhood, the synagogue itself followed in 1960. Combined with another Jewish congregation, Anshe Sholom B'Nai Israel is now located at 540 W. Melrose St. in the Lakeview community area. The synagogue's former building at Independence and Polk became the home of the Independence Boulevard Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which has been a mainstay in the North Lawndale community in the decades since.

The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is "orange-rated" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey.

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The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham.

Near right: Henry L. Newhouse, the firm's senior partner, was a significant Chicago architect working in Chicago's neighborhoods, often for Jewish clients.

Examples of Newhouse's work, either designed in solo practice or with later partner Felix Bernham, include (top right): the Melissia Ann Elam House at 4726 S. King Dr. (1903; a designated Chicago Landmark); (middle left) many of the houses and small flat buildings that comprise the Washington Park Court Chicago Landmark District on Chicago's South Side; (middle right) the Sutherland Hotel at E. 47th St. and S. Drexel Blvd. (1917; individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and (bottom) KAM Synagogue (now Operation PUSH), 4945 S. Drexel Blvd. (1923-24).

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## Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object with the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### ***Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage***

*Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building exemplifies the significance of synagogue buildings as important religious, community and social buildings in the history of Chicago's Jewish communities.

- The building exemplifies the important and significant history of the North Lawndale neighborhood in the early 20th century when it was Chicago's most prominent Jewish neighborhood. Through its location on Independence Boulevard, the building reflects the importance of Douglas and Independence boulevards as important locations for the Lawndale community's significant institutions and synagogues.

***Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture***

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.*

- The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is a handsome and well-built synagogue building, and it exemplifies this property type of significance to Chicago neighborhood history.
- The building was designed in the Classical Revival architectural style, a historically important style in the history of Chicago and significant in the design of Chicago synagogues in the early 20th century.
- The building is finely crafted with traditional building materials, including yellow face brick and gray limestone. It is detailed with Classical-style details such as its front pedi-mented entrance with attached Ionic columns.
- The building's sanctuary and associated vestibule are finely crafted and detailed with Classical-style ornament. The sanctuary has large-scale Corinthian pilasters and brilliantly-colored stained-glass windows. The sanctuary is also ornamented with a finely-

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crafted, decorative-metal chandelier, hung from a recessed "lantern" at the center of the ceiling that is decorated with stained-glass panels and ornamental moldings.

***Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect or Designer***

*Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is the work of the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham, with the firm's senior partner, Henry L. Newhouse being a significant architect working in Chicago's neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- Working either solo or in partnership with Felix M. Bernham, Newhouse designed many buildings of note, including the Melissia Ann Elam House (a designated Chicago Landmark), the former KAM Synagogue (now Operation PUSH) and several houses and small flat buildings in the Washington Park Court Chicago Landmark District, located east of S. King Dr. and north of Washington Park.
- Newhouse is also significant for his commercial designs, including the Sutherland Hotel at S. Drexel Blvd. and E. 47th St., built in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and several movie theaters, including the Howard, Metropolitan and Roseland theaters (either demolished or converted to non-

theater use).

### ***Integrity Criteria***

*The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.*

The (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building retains very good physical integrity on its exterior, displayed through its historic location, overall design, historic materials, details and ornamentation. The building retains its historic face-brick street elevations and common-brick side and rear walls. The building also retains very good interior physical integrity in its primary significant interior spaces, including the sanctuary and associated vestibule, which retain their overall spatial volumes and historic decorative features, including Classical-style ornament, decorative-metal chandelier, and most stained-glass windows.

Changes to the building are relatively minor and do not impact the building's historic and architectural significance. The most important changes to the building's exterior is the replacement of original window sash with replacement sash and non-historic doors. Interior changes to the sanctuary and vestibule include non-historic vestibule light fixtures, pews, stained-glass windows under the balcony, balcony railings, and balcony projection booth.

Despite these changes, the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building retains its ability to express its architectural and historical values as a significant Classical Revival-style religious building that strongly exemplifies the importance of synagogue architecture to the

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North Lawndale community. The building represents the important history of the Jewish community that was an important part of the history of North Lawndale in particular and Chicago in general. The building is a fine example of the architecture of Henry L. Newhouse, a significant architect in the history of Chicago neighborhood architecture. The building's historic integrity is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express such values.

## **Significant Historical and Architectural Features**

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
- The sanctuary with its balcony; and

- The entrance vestibule to the sanctuary, with its staircases to the sanctuary balcony.

The significant features of these interior spaces include their overall historic spatial volumes, historic decorative wall and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, historic decorative-metal chandelier and associated decorative recessed "lantern" with stained-glass panels, and historic large-scale stained-glass windows lighting the sanctuary balcony. Specifically excluded as significant features are small-scale stained-glass windows under the sanctuary balcony, sanctuary wall sconces, and light fixtures in vestibule staircases. Non-historic elements of the sanctuary and vestibule, including vestibule lighting, sanctuary pews, sanctuary balcony railings and balcony projection booth, are not considered significant features for the purpose of this proposed designation.

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**A rendering of the planned Anshe Sholom Synagogue building published at the time of its construction.**

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### **CITY OF CHICAGO**

Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

### **Department of Planning and Development**

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Patricia A. Scudiero, Managing Deputy Commissioner, Zoning and Land Use Bureau  
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### **Illustrations**

Historic Preservation Division: cover, pp. 5, 9, 10 (bottom left), 11 (top left, top right), 12, and 18 (top right and bottom). Historic Maxwell

Street: p. 6 (top).

Cutler, Jewish Chicago: A Pictorial History : 6 (bottom) and 14. Meites, History of the Jews in Chicago: pp. 7 (top) and 18 (top left). From various websites: pp. 7 (bottom), 16, and 18 (middle). Carey Wintergreen collection: pp. 10 (top, bottom right) and 11 (bottom). William Berinstein collection: p. 22.

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April 3, 2014 Report to the Commission on Chicago

Landmarks on the

**(Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building 754 S.  
Independence Blvd. / 3808 W. Polk St.**

**The Department of Planning and Development finds that the proposed designation of the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building as a Chicago Landmark supports the City's overall planning goals for the surrounding North Lawndale community area and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.**

Constructed in 1924 to 1926, the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building is a significant Classical Revival-style religious building that strongly exemplifies the importance of synagogue architecture to the North Lawndale community. The building represents the important history of the Jewish community that was an important part of the history of North Lawndale in particular and Chicago in general. The building is a fine example of the architecture of Henry L. Newhouse, a significant architect in the history of Chicago neighborhood architecture.

The subject property is zoned RM-5, as are other properties along Independence Boulevard, one of the city's wide boulevards with a landscaped median. The primary purpose of RM districts is to accommodate detached houses, two-flats, townhouses and multi-unit residential buildings. Although these districts accommodate a wide range of housing types, they are primarily intended to accommodate moderate- to high-density, multi-unit residential buildings in areas where such development already exists or where it is desired in the future. Within this general classification, an RM-5 district typically allows multi-residential buildings to rise to a maximum height of 3 1/2 to 4 stories.

Properties that are near the subject property along side streets such as Polk, Lexington and Arthington have a variety of zoning classifications, but are typically zoned RT-4. This zoning classification is meant to accommodate detached houses, two- flats, townhouses and low-density, multi-unit residential buildings at a density and building scale that is compatible with RS districts, comprised of detached houses on individual lots.

The subject property is served by public transportation. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue Line stop at South Pulaski Road is located roughly 6 blocks northwest of the property. In addition, CTA bus routes run along nearby W. Harrison St., W. Roosevelt Rd., S. Pulaski Rd. and S. Homan Ave.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 1000, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

The subject property is a contributing building to the proposed Chicago Park Boulevard System Historic District, which has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and is undergoing final review. Other properties in the area recognized either as National Historic Landmarks, National Register-listed properties, or Chicago Landmarks include the Sears, Roebuck and Company Complex, made up of properties located near S. Homan Ave. and W. Arthington St. (National Historic Landmark and proposed for Chicago Landmark designation); the Sears Administration Building (Chicago Landmark) at 3333 W. Arthington St.; the Jewish Peoples Institute (Chicago Landmark and National Register-listed) at 3500 W. Douglas Blvd.; the Five Houses on Avers District (Chicago Landmark), and Garfield Park (National Register-listed).

The Department supports the designation of the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building as a Chicago Landmark. Landmark designation and the rehabilitation of historic buildings is supported by "Life Along the Boulevards," which comprehensively looked at the City's park boulevard system. Preserving buildings such as this provides many long-term benefits to the City. Landmark designation fosters pride in the surrounding community and encourages preservation and rehabilitation through a range of incentives. It serves as a model for sustainable development by retaining existing buildings and adapting them to modern conditions. Preservation of Chicago's architectural heritage attracts tourists and new residents as well as contributes to the quality of life for Chicago citizens.

In conclusion, landmark designation of the (Former) Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building supports the City's overall planning goals for Chicago's North Lawndale community area and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.